THE

CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

XI. SEPTEMBER, 1833. Vol. I.

OM THE SOURCE OF TRUE HAPPINESS.

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom."—Prov. iii. 13.

INESS! What a train of pleasant feelings does the ound awaken in our bosoms. We are all anxious to happiness. Its attainment is the great object which we ore us in life. The means by which we may be able to joy, or to banish sorrow from our hearts, occupy our nts by day, and mingle with our dreams in the night . The youthful mind, in particular, is eagerly bent on rsuit of happiness, and it entertains sanguine hopes, and nes glowing expectations from the prospects which the ng of life discloses. There is, then, a buoyancy of soul, rfulness of spirit, which pours its tide of gladness upon all al nature, and invests surrounding objects with a mantle it, covering and concealing the dark spots which, sooner er, will assuredly present themselves to view. In the istance, man seems to be introduced into a world, where s nothing to do but reap a harvest of happiness, and ingly he applies himself with eagerness to the delightful He sees not the clouds that are gathering to intercept nshine, and darken the bright visions with which his s entranced. He knows not that there are joys which n the depth of sorrow, and the bitterness of disappoint-

How appropriate in such circumstances is the severe ition of Solomon, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, t thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and n the way of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; now thou that for all these things God will bring thee udgment."

none be alarmed lest we should manifest an anxiety to ut happiness from the soul of man, and then cast him e midst of a cold, unfeeling world, where few will sympa- with his miserable condition. Far be it from us to make

one unholy endeavour to remove a plant of heavenly origin—
plant which the hand of a God of goodness hath planted;
to deprive any of the refreshing shade which it extends ov
the soul in scorching seasons of affliction. Nay, we stand n
forward as the enemies of happiness, which we would glad
promote; and instead of lessening the amount of human enjo
ment, we would willingly increase it an hundred fold, and,
the same time, render it more pure and more lasting. W
would cherish the divine plant in the heart, by plucking t
the noxious weeds which check its growth, and by fostering
with careful hand, until distinguished for beauty and glory,
waves with prosperous fruit, like the trees in Lebanon.

Can it, however, be considered unreasonable that we call
men to have all their views of happiness, as well as the happ
ness itself, associated with wisdom; and, with a holy jealous
to preserve it apart from all folly and extravagance? "Wou
you," we say, "have happiness pure—would you have it pe
manent—would you have it always conveying fresh treasur
to the soul—would you retain it under the character of a bles
ing, and preserve it from degenerating into a curse—would y
have it issue in the glory of heaven, and not in the flames
hell?—then, let it be founded in wisdom, even the wisdom th
cometh from above; for, saith the Scripture, 'happy is t
man that findeth wisdom.'"

But it may be asked, what is this wisdom which we mai
tain to be so eminently conducive to happiness? We sh
endeavour to answer the question, illustrating our views by fam
liar examples. Let it not be supposed that we mean to gi
an account of all the shades of signification, which writers ha
attached to the term wisdom. Such information might be c
rious, and even correct, but it would be rather unprofitabl
and as we are treating of *wisdom*, it will be *wise* to study t
edification of our readers. What we intend is, to sieze on t
proper acceptation as it occurs in common usage, and is san
tioned by the word of God; and to exhibit it in a clear ligh
in order that it may be distinctly apprehended, and that
seeking happiness through wisdom, men may not mistake th
aim through ignorance or inadvertence.

*Wisdom consists in being suitably affected by the kno
ledge which we acquire, and in acting steadily upon*
Observe this definition. In the use of the means with whi
God hath graciously furnished us, we acquire certain kno
ledge; and if our minds are well directed, this knowledge w
modify our feelings and regulate our conduct. When kno

s serves these purposes—when it is not left to decay in the and does not lie there as a dead letter, but is employed omoting useful objects, the exercise of thus employing it led WISDOM. Wisdom, however, does not apply to utward act, but to the state of mind and of feeling from immediately that act proceeds. Our meaning, we hope, ly understood. Men acquire knowledge; they discern n relations; and on this knowledge they act, and by the ption of these relations they are guided in life: now, the ise of mind, which leads directly to such results, is called m. From this view of the subject, which will be seen clearly when it comes to be illustrated by examples, we that wisdom is always associated with something practi- that it is far removed from mere speculation, and that in ghest sense, it forms the connecting link between know- and the fruits of knowledge—between, for instance, the very of God, and the enjoyment of God.

ne experience of summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, stablished among us the knowledge of God's bounty, in g us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons; and we have learned, that there is a time for casting the seed into the nd, as a necessary step towards securing the promised joy rvest. We have acquired this knowledge, and we are so bly affected by it, that we fail not to employ the season of ng in the laborious cultivation of the earth. Here, then, e wisdom of the husbandman, who breaketh up the fallow nd, casting in the precious seed, and trusting to a God of goodness, for a plentiful and joyous harvest-home. Would t be folly in the same person to refuse to avail himself s knowledge of the seasons, and of the God of the seasons, o allow briers and thorns to overspread his fair possessions, o exhibit these, instead of fields waving with golden grain? it would. But beware, lest, in pronouncing this sentence, have condemned yourselves, and proclaimed your own folly, neglecting the cultivation of your minds and hearts. cases are so perfectly parallel, that, though it may seem ular, we cannot proceed without solemnly calling upon all atch the conduct of the husbandman, and to follow, in tual things, the very laudable example which he sets. labours of the husbandman, in the end, promote his hap- ss; and he rejoices, not in the idleness, but in the work of his ls. In like manner, if we would consult our own happiness and hereafter, to diligence in business, we must add fer- y of spirit, and the service of the Lord. By studying pre-

sent ease either in the things of the world, or in the things o
God, we are raising an awful barrier in the way of our ow
true enjoyment.

The meaning of wisdom will be still more fully understoo
by considering the language which our Saviour applied to th
unjust steward. The steward had been accused unto his mas
ter of having wasted his goods; and knowing that he had fo
feited his situation, he immediately had recourse to means, th
most fraudulent it is true, but at the same time the most plaus
ible and successful, for ingratiating himself with his lord
debtors, that they might receive him into their houses, as h
could not dig, and was ashamed to beg. The lord commend
ed the unjust steward; that is, he held forth the consumma
wisdom which he evinced, as worthy of imitation in a bett
cause; and Jesus remarked on the whole proceeding, th
"the children of this world are wiser in their generation tha
the children of light." In this case, also, the wisdom of th
steward, as it was commended by his lord, consisted in availin
himself of the knowledge which he had acquired, for adaptin
means to an end; and thus are illustrated at once its true n
ture, and the practical results to which it invariably leads. L
us not, however, leave this example, fraught as it is with usef
instruction, without inquiring how it comes to pass, that "th
children of this world are in their generation wiser than th
children of light." Why is it that earth, and the pleasures
earth, and its lying vanities, and hollow gratifications, and eva
escent happiness, exert such a commanding influence over h
ings destined for immortality? Are our powers of acquirin
knowledge never to soar above sublunary objects? Or, ha
ing mounted on wings of holy contemplation, and discover
the sublimities of the universe, and the glory of its Creato
and the relations established between God and man, shall w
be less powerfully impelled to act suitably to these relation
than was the unjust steward to provide for his future subsis
ence? O let us endeavour by vigorous practical godliness
by every work of faith, and by every labour of love, to wi
away, from the christian name, the deep disgrace, that "t
children of this world are, in their generation, wiser th
the children of light."

As a further illustration of the meaning of wisdom, let
take the statement respecting the folly of Atheism, contain
in Psalm xiv. 1—"the fool hath said in his heart, there is
God." It was not want of knowledge, but want of wisdo
that gave birth to this monstrous assertion; it was a disincli

act upon the knowledge which he had obtained. "The ath said," not as the dictate of his understanding, but as sire of his heart, "there is no God." His wish "was to that thought." It never was nor could be the imparercise of the understanding, that drove any to such con-n;—nay, the understanding spurns it as unreasonable, ntradicted by the overwhelming testimony of all creation. could suggest to the human mind, so forlorn, so spirito despairing a view? Ah! it was folly—rank and deady; for it is the fool that hath said in his heart there is od, and all are fools before heaven and earth, who can themselves to entertain a sentiment so revolting and ab-

Observe, then, how this passage indirectly, but most fully, bears on the subject before us. Folly is the oppo- wisdom. Wisdom would have led to the adoption of ain dictate of the understanding, with reference to the be- f God, and to humble submission to the divine will ed on this knowledge, and to consequent peace and hap-. Folly, by rejecting this straight forward and rational e, plunges man into misery. Thus, by contrariety, we per- the soundness of our definition of wisdom, and its strict lance with the admirable examples furnished in the Word od. Let all learn, from such views, to guard against this not merely in theory, but in practice; lest they be ranked, , among those who, having continued to say in their , there is no God, will have an eternity to lament over impious folly.

stly—let us view the account which we have given of m, as illustrated by the decided attention which we are l to devote to the religion of Jesus. *Wisdom*, it will be mbered, *consists in being suitably affected by the know- which we acquire, and in steadily acting upon it.* sometimes purchase a momentary gratification at the ex- of a lifetime of remorse; or by indulging a little present and slothfulness, they forfeit some substantial and perma- good. Such conduct is not suggested by wisdom but by

In the present world, then, and with reference to tempo- terests, wisdom demands, and our own happiness equally nds, the sacrifice of some present gratifications. Look to nown of the conqueror, and you will discover that sleep- ights, and wearisome days, seasons of anxious thought, f dreadful agitation, were among the means which wreathed row with the laurels of victory. Look to success in any did undertaking, and you will find that fearful difficulties

must be surmounted. Let us apply such remarks to the religion of Jesus, and to the heaven to which it points. As the word of God is true, we are all by nature sinners—guilty, polluted, miserable. We are the children of wrath, even as others, and in our unconverted state, liable to destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Is it wise to rest contented in such a state? No. Remember Nineveh. But is there hope of deliverance. Yes—a greater than Jonas has been sent, not merely to proclaim our guilt, but to save us from our sins, and introduce us to eternal happiness. Well—is it wise to neglect this salvation—to spurn this happiness? No more than it is wise for the drowning man to refuse to sieze the rope which is thrown him for safety? Thus is wisdom, in every point of view, the source of true happiness; and this holds out a strong inducement to seek after wisdom. Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."—Prov. iii. 13–17. D.

THE NATURE AND FORM OF AN OATH.

An oath is an act of religious worship, containing a solemn appeal to the omniscience of God, before whom all things are manifest, invoking him to witness the truth of the declaration which is thereby made. Herein the Almighty is acknowledged as a righteous judge, who will vindicate the truth, and punish the transgressor who utters falsehood. The act of swearing is expressed in the passive form of the Hebrew verb, showing that an oath is to be taken only in cases of real necessity. The word which is used for the same purpose in the Greek language is derived from the name given to the reputed god of the dead; and may intimate that the person made oath with death in his view, or that he acknowledged he had to meet his God in death. That an oath may be lawfully taken under the New Testament as well as under the Old, seems to plainly appear from Heb. vi. 6, "Men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." When the

Priest "adjured" our Redeemer, Mat. xxvi. 63, he re- which he would not have done, if an oath had been un- l under the Gospel dispensation; and we find Paul the stle using the form of an oath, 2 Cor. i. 23. Hence, Christ says, Matt. v. 34, "Swear not at all," he is cing of profane oaths, and of swearing by the creatures, of which he mentions in the following verses, namely, en, earth, Jerusalem, &c. adding, "But let your communi- n be, yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these th of evil;" and the prohibition which is expressed, James 2, is to be understood in the same manner, in reference to s ordinary conversation. There are circumstances in which annot be conscientiously excused from taking an oath; the of God may require it, the discharge of some particular duty rds ourselves or others; controversies may be hereby settled, ren satisfied, the oppressed relieved, and our own inno- e manifested. The true God is the proper object of reli- s worship, and by him *alone* men should swear, Deut. vi. —"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him, and shalt swear by his name," see Jer. xii. 16; Isa. lxv. 16, e that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of n." An oath implies an invocation, and we cannot properly ar by that which we cannot religiously invocate; thence, to ar by creatures, however glorious, is the sin of idolatry. n oath is to be taken in the obvious meaning of the words, ey are explained by the administrator. We are not left berty to attach a private interpretation by any kind of men- eserve—see Jer. iv. 2—"Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth *ruth*, in *judgment*, and in *righteousness*."

Though an oath is of a moral nature, there were some cases which ceremonial rites were conjoined therewith of old, ch are not now necessary under the gospel. Abraham sed his servant to put his hand under his thigh, and after- ds to swear, when he was sending him to take a wife for his Isaac.—Gen. xxiv. 2. This rite tended not only to show servant's submission to the will of his master, but to mani- his faith in the promised *seed* which was to spring from loins of Abraham. This appears still more clearly when we sider how the promise made to Abraham, was to be ful- d by means of the errand on which Abraham was sending servant. We have a similar instance recorded, Gen. xlvii. 30, 31. When Jacob was near death, he directed his son eph to put his hand under his thigh, and to swear that he ld not bury him in Egypt, but with his fathers. Hereby,

Joseph also displayed his faith in the same *promised seed*, for the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, Gen. xlvi. 26, are said to have come "out of his loins;" it is *thigh* in the Hebrew text. We find, likewise, where men entered into solemn engagements, by way of covenant, they sometimes cut a beast asunder, and passed between the parts, which seemed to imply a heavy imprecation or curse upon the unfaithful party, Jer. xxxiv. 18. Forms of oaths have been various, after the manner in which they have been established by custom or authority, consisting, for the most part, of some bodily action, and a prescribed form of words. As heathens kissed their idols, or laid their hands upon them, in their religious worship, they likewise connected the same practice with their form of swearing. To that mode of idolatrous worship, Job refers, chap. xxxi. 26, 27, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, &c. and my mouth hath *kissed* my hand." The idolatrous Israelites kissed Baal when worshipping, 1 Kings xix. 18—"Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." See also Hosea xiii. 2—"Let the men that sacrifice *kiss* the calves." Hence heathens, when solemnizing an oath, considered it sanctioned by most special obligation, when they either kissed the object of their superstitious veneration, or laid their hand upon it. Thus we are told by *Cornelius Nepos*, that "Hamilcar, the Carthaginian, led his son Hannibal to the altar of Jupiter, at which he had begun to sacrifice, and causing him to take hold of the altar, to swear that he would never be at friendship with the Romans." Among them that are called christians of the Greek Church, an oath is considered remarkably solemn, when it is given with the touch or the kiss of the image of the Virgin Mary.—See *Thompson's Travels*, vol. 2d, page 48. They who belong to the Church of Rome have attached much importance to the *touch* or kiss of an image or sacred relic, when making oath; and from them is introduced the practice among Protestants of laying the hand upon the Scriptures, and kissing the book: it is called a *corporal oath*, from "*corpus Christi*," the body of Christ, as persons formerly swore over the host, or consecrated wafer, which they thought was transubstantiated into the body of Christ.

To make oath by kissing the Holy Scriptures is only the invention of men. The kiss is rather an immediate act of reverence to the book; it only differs from the form used among the heathen by substituting a book in the room of an idol, and from that of the church of Rome, by putting the Gospel in the

lace of a saint or sacred relic. Few are so stupid as to think hey swear by the book itself. They profess to swear by the reat object of worship through this medium. We find, how-ver, from Scripture, that it amounted to the same, in effect, whether a man worshipped an idol itself, or attempted to worship the True God through the medium of an idol.—Ex. xxii. 5. After Aaron had made a molten calf, and said, "these be thy gods, O Israel," he said, "to-morrow is a feast o the LORD," "*to Jehovah.*" They intended to worship the rue God by means of that image; yet the Lord said unto Moses, verse 8, "they have made them a molten calf, and nave worshipped it." The same may be seen in the history of he golden calves, erected by Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 28, 29, 30—"The people went to worship *before* the one, even unto Dan." It appears they professed to worship the True God *before* each of those idols, nevertheless, their idolatry is left on record, o be a warning to all succeeding generations. In like manner, when men swear by kissing the Scriptures, they are worshipping God through a medium which he never appointed in his word. Every part of acceptable worship is either distinctly expressed in scripture, or may be deduced therefrom by fair and necessary consequence. That which is revealed as the approved practice of godly persons, we may safely consider as equal to a command directing us in any similar case. The approved conduct of good men in making oath is presented to us in the word of God by lifting up the hand, with which the very light of nature seems evidently to agree. When the Almighty condescends to confirm our faith, in his word, either of promise or threatening, in revealing himself, by an oath, it is set forth under the emblem of this bodily gesture used by men. We find this mode of swearing exemplified in the history of Abraham, Gen. xiv. 22—"I have lift up my hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth." There is an evident allusion to this approved form of swearing in ancient time, Psalm cxliv. 8., where it is said of the wicked, "Their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." The Lord reveals himself by oath, in condescension to our infirmities, Deut. xxxii. 40—"I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever," showing that as he can swear by no greater, he swears by *himself.* The Lord says, Ex. vi. 8—"I will bring you into the land, concerning which I did swear to give it".—*(Heb. I lifted up my hand.)* When the Lord threatens the murmurers in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 30, he says, "Doubtless ye shall not come into the land concern-

ing which I sware"—*(Heb. I lifted up my hand.)* Favours are promised and judgments threatened in Ezek. xx., where the Almighty sets forth his faithfulness by oath, and it is expressed eight times in that chapter, by lifting up the hand; twice, in verse 5; see verses 6, 15, 23, 28, 42; also, Ezek. xliv. 12, and xlvii. 14. The angel of the covenant as he was beheld in vision, Dan. xii. 7, "lifted up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven," in token of special solemnity, and "sware by him that liveth for ever." This same glorious character was seen in John's vision, Rev. x. 5, 6, standing upon the sea, and upon the earth; he lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever. The little book which he had in his hand is that which he prevailed to open, chap. v. 7, and it was now *opened*, as the Greek word shows, Rev. x. 2. The little book contained the purpose of God concerning his church in future times; and the oath of him that prevailed to unfold its mysteries is there recorded to confirm our faith in the full realization of the glorious truths which it comprised, as was done by "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie;" namely, the word and the oath of him who, in that sublime vision, has the drapery of the sky floating on his shoulders.

This is the only form of swearing authorised in the word of God. Let none imagine that the form is of small importance, if we declare the truth. We have a form established which we may no more venture to change, than Moses might have attempted to alter the pattern of the tabernacle which the Lord "showed him in the mount".—Exod. xxv. 40. "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee."—Prov. xxx. 6.

Cross-roads, 24th July, 1833. SAMUEL CRAIG.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.—No. II.

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air."—1 COR. ix. 26.

THE candidates for honours in the Grecian games were accustomed, on the eve of the decisive struggle, to go through the movements which were soon to determine their victory or defeat. Those who were to contend in the race were observed to "run uncertainly"—to run hither and thither in apparent

aywardedness, without wishing to gain any other object esides the pliability of their bodies, and readiness for the en- gement. And those, in like manner, who were to contend pugilistic exercises, were accustomed to fight uncertainly— "beat the air" for no purpose, but to summon up their ergies, and to prepare themselves for exhibiting their utmost eats of valour and of skill.

To this custom there is manifestly an allusion in the pas- ge which stands at the head of this article. The life of ristians in general, and of ministers of the gospel, in particu- r, is a race; and the apostle felt that it ill became him, in ther capacity, to resemble those who ran uncertainly, when out to commence the decisive trial. He felt that he had ready begun the struggle—that the race was before him— at competitors were endeavouring to outrun him—that a cloud witnesses were beholding him—that the decision was proaching, and that already the crown was a winning or a sing; and, therefore, with every weight thrown aside, and ith every nerve strained to the utmost, and with his whole ul, body, and spirit roused into the most vigorous and solute determination, he exclaims, "This one thing I do, rgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth those things which are before, I press toward the mark r the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus." The ristian life is also a fight, and the apostle did not go through like those who were accustomed to beat the air, by way of reparation, for the fierce engagement. He felt himself in ctual combat with a host of antagonists; he felt himself in mbat with the world, the devil, and the flesh, with the lust f the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and ith principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness f this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places; and he new that his only alternative was to conquer all or die. In- ead, therefore, of beating the air in uncertainty, he took nto him the whole armour of God, and fought the fight f faith, and won, at length, the palm of triumph, and the nfading crown of victory.

Has it ever occurred to you, in connexion with the passage hich these remarks are intended to illustrate, that a neglect f the lesson it enforces, is one of the most general and fatal efects of the professors of religion in our day? Do we not ften go the rounds of duty, without any definite object before s? It is feared there are few whose consciences do not plead uilty to the weighty charge implied in these questions.

Christians too frequently approach the throne of grace without any end whatever, but just *to say their prayers*. They confess sins, but they do not mourn over them; they acknowledge blessings, but they do not feel them; they ask favours, but they do not desire them. Parents collect their children and servants *to ask them their questions*, or *to go about worship;* but perhaps a single idea never enters their minds of any important spiritual end to be gained in these duties. Sabbath-school teachers go to their classes; but should you ask them for what purpose, perhaps they could hardly tell you; they have no fixed design before them, which, from their hearts, they wish to accomplish. Ministers of the gospel, in like manner, too often ascend the pulpit without any clear distinct aim; all they want to do is just *to preach a sermon*. Now, such christians, parents, Sabbath-school teachers, and gospel ministers, are not like the apostle; they are like the intended combatants in the Grecian games—they run as uncertainly—they fight as those that beat the air; and not until the race may be won by such running, or the victory achieved by such fighting, will they attain the objects which they ought to keep constantly in view.

With this want of a decided end in the religious duties of professing christians, bustling activity is perfectly consistent. Those who run uncertainly, by way of preparation for the trial, may have run as swiftly as when afterwards engaged in the actual conflict, and those who beat the air, may have been as violent in their gesture as when confronted with the stoutest antagonist; and yet, in both cases, there could have been no approximation, either to defeat or to victory. In like manner, it is astonishing what noise and bustle we can make by apparent zeal and activity in our duties, while no object is gained, and simply because none is decidedly aimed at.

Christians, you have something else to do than to run uncertainly; you have a race before you, and *that* you must run with patience and eagerness, if ever you would arrive at the mark for the prize. Think of the crown that is at stake, keep it ever in view, and so run that you may finally obtain it; and do not forget that you must fight your way to glory; you have something else than air to beat. All the powers of darkness are marshalled in one phalanx of determined opposition to your dearest interests. You will, therefore, need to be clad in the impenetrable armour of righteousness, and to quit yourselves like men. Let victory over all your foes be your constant aim; and with the shield of God to de-

nd you, and the strength of Christ to sustain you, and the romises of the gospel to cheer you, you will at length be core than conquerors.

Parents, you are placed in a most solemn and responsible si- nation. Immortal souls are committed to your care; and the romise, which is to the children of believers as well as to aemselves, clearly proves, that should a son or daughter perish, l large portion of the guilt lies at the parent's door. Let a ense, therefore, of your awful responsibility, and a fear of en- iling blood-guiltiness upon yourselves, induce you to aim at ne conversion of your children. Never lose sight of this all- nportant object; labour and pray continually for its attainment, nd thus your efforts, instead of being scattered, and therefore eakened, by being directed to a multiplicity of ends, or to no nd whatever, will be concentrated upon a single point, and, nerefore, infinitely strengthened.

Sabbath-school teachers—you too are placed in a most im- ortant situation; and in you it is equally unpardonable to ounge through your duties, without aiming at any thing defi- ite and decisive. When, therefore, you again collect your upils around you, let each ask himself such questions as the ollowing—"What has brought me here, and what am I to o? Am I to try to spend an hour or two of the Lord's day what are commonly considered as religious exercises, and nen endeavour to persuade myself that I have been well em- loyed? Or is it my object to earn a reputation for piety and eal among my acquaintances and friends? Or shall I place it efore me, as my grand design, to show my extensive know- edge of scripture, and the ease and fluency with which I can peak about its doctrines? Or rather, is it not my duty to ink of the immortal souls which have been consigned to my harge, of the opportunity which God is now giving me of oing good, and of the means by which the understandings nd the hearts of the children around me may be most easily nlightened and impressed?" Set your minds at rest with re- ard to such questions as these; fix your thoughts upon the nd which your consciences tell you you ought to aim at, and eep that end full in view in your labours and prayers, and, by ne blessing of God, you will soon be surprised at the effects f your exertions.

Ministers of the gospel, the preceding remarks apply with enfold force to you. Why is it that the preaching of the ross is attended now with so few of the triumphs which marked s progress in the apostolic age? And why is it that our

hearts are not often cheered by British and Irish, as they are by American revivals of religion? There may be many reasons; but one, at least, every attentive reader has already anticipated. We have been accustomed to run as uncertainly, and to fight as those that beat the air. Let us try to remedy the evil. Let us propose as our great object the conversion of our hearers, and travail, as in birth, until Christ shall have been formed in their hearts: and, for the attainment of this end, let us preach, not *over the heads* of our hearers, but *to* them. Let us try to set forth plainly, affectionately, and solemnly, the simple doctrines and duties of religion. And, in all our labours in the pulpit, in visitation from house to house, at the bed of sickness, and in occasional intercourse with our hearers, let us aim at the ONE object, *the salvation of ourselves, and of them that hear us.* IGNOTUS.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

EDUCATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

AMONG the many excellent measures for the advancement of truth and righteousness, adopted by the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, at its late meeting, one was particularly interesting. Every thing must be interesting connected with the education of those destined to occupy so solemn and responsible an office as the ministry of the gospel. Not only is it requisite that such persons alone, as possess talents and capabilities for communicating instruction, should be elevated to so very responsible a sphere, but a wise and vigilant inspection should be placed over their whole preparatory course. It is right that those who are to be teachers in the church, should be well known to the brethren, that full opportunity should be afforded for obtaining a knowledge of their character, and of their devotedness to the cause of Christ. It is also essentially necessary that those who have in charge to commit to faithful men the things which they have heard among many witnesses, should have the fullest opportunities of becoming acquainted with the mental, literary, and religious qualifications of those to whom they entrust immortal souls.

For the purpose, therefore, of obtaining the greater security, on behalf of the candidates for the ministry of the gospel, shall ecclesiastical bodies commence a course of superintendence over

lividuals, in early youth, whom parents or guardians may ve devoted to the office of the christian ministry? This, it evident, would be well, could there be any security obtained at such individuals were converted characters. Were they ch, it would be most happy for themselves and for the urch, to have them publicly lent to the Lord, from their rliest youth; and, as separated from the world, and dedicated heaven, to have directed towards them the friendly superinndence of the whole church; and to have affectionately terested on their behalf the sympathies and prayers of the nole multitude of the faithful. Under the kind superinndence of fathers in the ministry, their studies would be rected: by the parental reproof or encouragement of those hom they venerate, their faults would be corrected, and their nergies aroused and sustained; while the publicity given to their ture prospects would act continually as a monitor to themlves, and point them out to the friends of truth as interesting jects for the exercise of christian sympathy, and of active enevolence.

But, alas, no good intentions of a guardian, no dedication to ie work of the ministry by a parent, can secure the piety of child. It is the duty of every parent to dedicate his child to ne Lord; it is good and commendable for a parent to wish nd pray that his son may be a faithful minister of Jesus. In ne expectation of his prayers being graciously answered, it is ght and proper for him to give his son an education suitable so important an office; but still, a parent's wishes and pray-rs may be grievously disappointed: and the dedication of a ild to the ministry, by a parent or guardian, can furnish no fficient warrant for any ecclesiastical body to throw open before im the pulpit of the gospel ministry. No sufficient warrant furnished, even when a father or mother has, in fervent love God, dedicated a beloved son to God's work; but, alas, is ere not much reason to fear, that a very different motive rompts many to seek the "priest's office" for those for whom ney are bound to provide.

Great difficulties, therefore, lie in the way of any ecclesiastial body, and especially of ecclesiastical bodies in our own eighbourhood, in providing persons properly qualified to disharge the duties of the christian ministry. Why, it might be sked, what have ecclesiastical bodies to do but satisfy themelves as to the mental, literary, and religious qualifications of inividuals offering themselves as candidates; and to accept or reject hem? Very true; but is there any prospect, at least, in the very

imperfectly educated condition of that portion of the community from which ministers are usually furnished, that properly qualified candidates can be obtained, unless ecclesiastical bodies undertake a superintendence of elementary education? Were there no barrier against premature entrance on the course of collegiate study, mere boys would rush from school to college, without suitable preparation, and thus lose, to a great extent, the benefit of a collegiate education, and eventually injure or destroy their future usefulness.

It is acknowledged on all hands, that in literary acquirements, the pulpits of Ulster have been greatly benefitted by the strict attention which has been paid to the qualifications of students entering the Royal College of Belfast, and the superintendence exercised over them in the progress of their studies.

To the system of literary superintendence, so useful in itself, many and formidable evils had, however, been attached; and the attention of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland having been, by a petition of one of their members, directed to these, some time since, they promptly adopted measures for their removal.

They felt themselves called on, especially in the peculiar circumstances of their country, to do something more than their brethren of the Secession in Scotland, who, in the capacity of church courts, know nothing of individuals going forward to the christian ministry, till they offer themselves to Presbyteries for examination previously to their entrance into the Divinity Hall. The Secession Church in Ireland, the early and steady friends of home education, were anxious to know and superintend, through the course of preparatory education, all whom they expected to apply for admission into the sacred office.

Their great embarrassment, however, in pursuing such a course was this, that the very permission of attending on the collegiate classes, granted, it might be, to a mere boy, was construed into a tacit pledge on the part of the Presbytery, that this boy had been received as a properly qualified candidate for the sacred ministry; and while he passed, perhaps respectably, through one and another examination, on merely literary attainments, each expression of a Presbytery's approval of such examination was construed into the reiteration of a pledge, that the young student was acknowledged to be on the direct and prosperous road to the open pulpit.

There was thus a very serious cause of alarm given, lest the preparation for the ministry of the gospel should be perverted into a wretched secular apprenticeship, and that the history

of preparation for the christian ministry should, in too many cases, be such as the following. A father, or fond mother, actuated either by desire for the glory of God, or by self-interest, or vanity, is resolved that one son, at least, shall be a minister. This son is selected previously to any developement of intellect or of character, to warrant such choice; and he is sent to school, and kept there, whatever be his success, with the avowed determination of making him a minister. So soon as it is hoped that by chance or favour there is a likelihood of his getting through an examination before a Presbytery—to a Presbytery he is carried. There his examination may be strict or lax; he may be the son of a minister, elder, or influential church member, or he may not; he may have come to years of discretion, and been admitted into christian communion, or he may be a mere child of some twelve or fourteen years of age;—still his examination is merely literary, and regarding acquired attainments only. He may be a genius or a blockhead—he may possess good powers of communicating information, or be wretchedly deficient; still, if he pass satisfactorily a short examination on what he has *acquired*, he enters college with approbation, as a CANDIDATE for the ministry of the gospel; and, from that day forward, he is so tied to the Presbytery, he and his friends believe that the Presbytery have so cordially adopted him, that, whatever be the future developement of his character, it is no easy matter to get rid of him. Onward he goes, through a course of mere literary instruction, and of mere literary examinations—a successful attendance on which binds him more and more closely to the Presbytery, and is construed by himself and the public into renewed security for his admission to the sacred office. His attainments in human learning are examined from time to time; but little inquiry is made as to his possessing the wisdom which comes down from above. Care is taken that he possess the necessary qualifications for entering philosophical classes, but he may enter on the study of divinity ignorant of the first principles of the oracles of God. On all hands he is acknowledged to be a candidate for the most solemn and awfully responsible office to which man can be raised—an office, where, above all others, he who teaches must himself know and feel what is to be taught; and yet, on he is driven from logic to ethics, and from ethics to physics, and not, it may be justly said, till he is at the open pulpit door—not till, in the opinion of the candidate himself, and of the public, pledges have been again and again given to him that all is well—not, in solemn fact, (however theory might talk,) till

the Presbytery have gone too far to retrace their steps, is there any proper examination instituted as to the religious qualifications of the candidate for the religious office to which he has been all along aspiring—as to his sound, practical, experimental knowledge of the great truths which he proposes to teach, and his own hearty self-devotedness to a work which, above all others, demands a self-denied and unreserved surrender to the service of him who went about continually doing good, and who, to save sinners, humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

The realization of any such history as this would evidently tend directly to the destruction of every thing sacred. How different would such a mode of introduction to the office of the holy ministry be from that followed by the congregationalists and other respectable bodies; with them the order of proceedings is reversed. An individual first approves himself to the church of which he is a member, not only as a believer, but as a zealous and acceptable servant of the church, for his Master's glory; and having been recommended by the church for the sacred word, and examined on religious knowledge, mental and literary qualifications, and self-devotedness to the gospel ministy, he is put under the superintendence of holy men of God, in a direct course of preparation for his great and awfully responsible undertaking.

The Presbyterian Synod of Ireland have adopted measures not only for securing all the advantages of such a system, but also of connecting with it the advantages resulting from an early superintendence of preparatory studies. While they have recommended to Presbyteries an increased attention to the literary qualifications of students, they solemnly warn all to beware of considering the satisfactory result of any literary examination as a pledge, either explicit or implied, that a student is received as a candidate for the gospel ministry; for no individual is recognized by the Synod, or at all acknowledged as in a course of preparation under their care for the sacred office, till after having satisfactorily passed an examination, previously to his entering the Divinity Hall, on his theological knowledge, personal religion, and self-devotedness to the work of the ministry.

This examination the Synod has, for the present, as a matter of convenience, entrusted to the Committee appointed for superintending the Divinity Hall, and the examinations of the Collegiate classes. A Committee for such a purpose the Synod do not require on the grounds on which the establishment

f such a Committee was proposed by the original Seceders, as ne condition of their return to the Scottish establishment; for, ank God, the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, unlike to the stablishment of Scotland—(nor to it alone)—preserves a pure ith, and maintains a soundness, enabling her both to prevent he admission of the heretical and profane, and to cut off di- eased members. Neither into her Presbyteries, nor her Com- nittees, is there any fear of a Unitarian or an Arminian obtain- ng admission; nor is she necessitated to resort to the deplora- le expedient of silently tolerating heresy and corruption, be- ause she has not the power of casting them off. From the ncreasing attention of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland to he religious and literary education of her students, the hap- iest results may be anticipated; her own congregations will eceive increasing profit and delight from the labours of young nen trained up for their benefit; and should any of these, when ejected by congregations in their own connexion, desert, in despair, to another standard, they will, there is no doubt, be received with even a more cordial welcome than heretofore.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

PERMIT me, gentlemen, through your columns, to say to the religious public, that the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland has, at its late meeting, done itself great honour, and the cause of religious liberty great benefit. The resolution passed on the subject of education, is strongly characterized by wisdom and good feeling. In fact, it is another of those long and bold steps by which the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland is advancing in the very front rank of the defenders of civil and religious liberty. It would, indeed, ill become Seceders, who have themselves suffered so much for conscience sake, to take any part in binding yokes on the necks of others, or of infringing on those rights of conscience, which their fathers bequeathed to them as a legacy dyed with their blood. Seceders know too well the nature of the human mind, to attempt to rule it by brute force; and they have too high a regard for the religion which they profess, to employ for its support or propagation the carnal weapons of the world's tyranny. They have, therefore, in the case of scriptural education, (and it is an index of their general feeling), declared themselves the enemies of all compulsion.

They hate, with a perfect hatred, the abominations of Popery; but they are too wise to imagine that by the arm of flesh, such abominations are to be overthrown; they deplore as much as it is possible for humanity to deplore, the fatal delusion which closes the eyes and the hearts of their Roman Catholic brethren against the word of God, but they know that it would be as useless as it would be unwise and wicked, to attempt either to drag or drive them to that word by any of those compulsory methods, proposed by that system which, of old, appeared in its own native deformity as persecution, but which, of late, has been compelled to wear the mask of toleration.

Such is their love for the persons of Roman Catholics, notwithstanding their detestation of their principles, that instead of goading them to madness, by pains and penalties, under the silly notion of thus making them Protestants, they will use every endeavour to win them by love, to truth and holiness—they will entreat and beseech them, by every motive, to receive and to improve the whole word of God; if they are unable to effect this most desirable object, they will feel truly thankful to God for every sentence of the Sacred Volume, which they are able to place in the hands, or engrave on the heart of a Roman Catholic brother; and should inveterate prejudice or priestcraft succeed in defeating them, even here, they will exert themselves, by connecting, so far as in their power, a scripturally moral with a literary education, to advance the great cause of truth; and thus to earn the commendation, which may be merited even where there is no success, they have done what they could. Far be it ever from the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, pettishly to refuse to do *any* good to a poor brother, because, through ignorance or prejudice, he may refuse to take so much good, or in such a way as she may wish. She will be sadly shorn of her glory, should the day ever come, when she will refuse *all* education to the unhappy Romanist, because he may be so stupid, or so wicked, as to refuse a strictly scriptural education.

The resolution of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland on the education question, will do much in establishing religious liberty on a secure foundation. Such a system of compulsion as that which has been long acted on, is not to be tolerated. Let us look to its practical working. A large society, for example, has, as one of its fundamental rules, that the scriptures *must* be read by pupils attending the schools. That same society expresses a willingness, in the appointment of masters, to give Roman Catholics a preference. A Ro-

an Catholic, then, let us suppose, has been appointed one of her schools, possessing the necessary literary qualifications; but though of so smooth an outward deportment, as adily to obtain abundance of certificates of character. Let us so suppose, (and surely such a case is not mere supposition,) hat he is a careless, godless character, a profane swearer, it nay be, a Sabbath breaker; a man, in short, to whom no christian father should ever think of entrusting any part of the religious education of his children. Yet this is the man under hom not only *must* Roman Catholic children read the holy criptures, or else receive no education at all, but Protestant hildren, too, if they would enjoy any advantages from this compulsory system of education, *must* accept this same worthless retch as the conductor of their studies through the holy word f God! A Protestant father may look with abhorrence on he character of such a teacher; he may shudder at the thought f his child being taught to pronounce the words and think on he ideas of God's holy word, by those lips which are each day ot with blasphemy; he may be filled with horror at the prospect of recollections of the sacred record being associated in the mind of his child with all that was detestable in the character of his master, yet for all this he has no remedy, if he wish to have his son educated, his son *must* read the scriptures daily, under the superintendance and guidance of a scoundrel; and what is still more galling likely to his Protestant feelings, that scoundrel a Papist. Even such a slight illustration as this of the compulsory system, should be sufficient to convince Protestants themselves, that if they wish real security for the best interests of their own children, they will oppose, with their whole might all compulsory systems of scriptural education.

The true liberty in this case, for which every friend of the Bible should contend, is, that if a parent wish his child to read the Bible at school, no power on earth should prevent him; and that if he refuse, while all remonstrance and persuasion should be employed, no power on earth should compel him. This is exactly the liberty contended for by the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland; and in the stand which they have taken on this part of the great education question, they occupy a most enviable eminence.

The capital objection to the new system of education I always believed to be, that the Roman Catholic Priesthood, though interested in keeping their people in ignorance, are constituted keepers of the consciences of children under their charge, instead of their parents. If a committee appoints a

time in school hours, or out of school hours, for the reading of the scriptures, the scholars have liberty to read the scriptures; but, supposing that the Priest should succeed in preventing the appointment of any period for scripture reading, then, no matter that all the parents of a parish should, with their whole hearts, desire a scriptural education for their children, through the national system they cannot obtain it; the Priest, by means of the Committee under his controul, has determined that the scriptures shall not be read, and all the votes of all the parents of the scholars cannot reverse their decree. This is no mere imaginary case; it has already happened, and is likely to happen often again. Most happy am I to find that the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, whom calumny, published in whole pamphlets, and read from the pulpit by ministers of the gospel, had so much abused, has, on this important subject, in most critical circumstances of its discussion, walked forth to the public in her accustomed dignity, not returning railing for railing, but bearing once again, as in the days of her venerated fathers, a testimony for truth, for conscience, and christian liberty. By a single resolution she has put on a proper basis the whole subject of National Education, establishing, for all, the right of reading the scriptures, claiming the guardianship of children for their parents, and not for their priests, and refusing compulsory interference with such guardianship.

Protestant fathers and mothers, and Roman Catholic fathers and mothers, look to the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, and see in the principles which she has laid down, the security of your rights, and a sure defence against all compulsion, and all deprivation of privilege. The Presbyterian Synod of Ireland claims for you the right of directing the education of your own children; she enters her solemn protest against any system of education for your children being forced upon you, but when you express a wish that your children should have in schools the free use of the Word of God, she defies Boards and Committees, and every power on earth, to say, nay. While thus, however, she disapproves of all the plans of wordly policy, and all the efforts of worldly violence, to drag either old or young to the Word of God, she has borne ample testimony to the necessity of the use of the scriptures for accomplishing the ends of moral education, without which there can be no safety to the community, or security to the throne; and she has added another to the many evidences already given of her love for unadulterated truth, attachment to the cause of liberty,

d her unwearied endeavours to benefit the present genera-
on, and transmit to their sons, and sons' sons, that glorious
ospel for which she made, in times past, so many sacrifices,
d which she has been a chief instrument, under God, of
eserving, in trying times, uncorrupted and pure. A.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

POPULAR ELECTION.

THE *Christian Freeman* would be unworthy of its name, ere it not the enemy of church patronage, and the friend of opular election. Popular election requires a friend in Ulster, or it has been tyrannically encroached upon; and so little has been exercised, even in quarters where it is subject of boast, hat its nature is not even understood. Permit me, through he medium of the *Christian Freeman*, to show the people heir rights on this subject, and to call them to claim these ights.

The choice of a minister of the gospel is vested by scripture, and by common sense, in the members of the congregation among whom he is to labour. No ecclesiastical court, no individual, whether ecclesiastic or layman, has any right to prescribe to a christian congregation who shall take charge of their souls. Let every congregation, therefore, jealously guard this most important right; and while they receive thankfully ll useful information, or even listen with attention to respectful dvice, let them indignantly repulse every thing that in the open r covert shape of authoritative command, would lord it over God's heritage.

The majority of the members of a christian congregation settles the choice of a christian minister. A christian congregation is not a collection of seat-holders, or stipend payers, in a certain house of worship, or parish, but an assembly of professing christians, who have, by proper authority, been admitted to the rights and privileges of the christian church. A christian congregation consists of a number of individuals admitted on scriptural grounds to christian communion, and assembling together for worship. Many persons who make a mere outward profession of christianity, or who make no profession whatever, may assemble with them for public worship, may contribute money for the benefit of the congregation; but still

they are no members of the congregation, and have no right to interfere with its proceedings. Christ's kingdom is not of this world; his church is a distinct body, having members separated from the world, laws and institutions different from those of the world; and enjoying privileges from which the world is excluded.

A christian minister is appointed over a congregation of the church, and the members of that congregation alone have the right of choice. Any other regulation would be destruction to the church. Give to mere payers of stipend, or attenders at public worship, the right of voting—give to the careless, ungodly world, the rights and privileges of church members, and the careless, ungodly world outnumber the church, and appoint over her, if they please, Deists or Atheists as her ministers. The giving of the privilege of voting for the choice of a christian minister, far more the actual appointment of a christian minister, to any other than the members of the church, is an overthrow of all church discipline, and an absolute demolition of the structure of christianity, which Christ and his apostles raised.

The majority of church members, by which the choice of a christian minister is determined, is a numerical majority. All other majorities are the devil's majorities. The Great King and Head of the church, who judges, not by outward appearance, but by the heart, regards not the rich more than the poor; whatever distinctions the world may make between her treatment of the rich and the poor, christianity makes none; at her table the christian beggar and the christian lord, are equally welcome and equally honoured. Before every believer, whether clothed in scarlet or clothed in rags, the whole privileges of God's own family are laid freely down; in the estimation of him who is King of kings, the sceptred monarch and the beggar on the dunghill, who have received Christ, are on the same level. What human authority, therefore, is it that dares to make distinctions where God has made none, and in the spiritual kingdom of Christ to compel the poor of God's elect to be trampled under foot by the pride of family or the pride of cash! Is it not enough that the poor servants of the Lord Jesus should, in the world, be each day ground in slavery, or harrassed in vassalage, because they are poor—must the intolerable pride of Satan pursue them even within the sacred precints of their God's own sanctuary, and deprive them there, too, of their dearest rights and privileges, *because they are poor?* What could the world have thought of christianity, had she taught, that because the estated gentle-

man pays a pound a year suppose, to the support of her ministry, while the poor labourer, to whom this gentleman pays eight pence a day board wages, contributes only two shillings and six pence, (a sum, by the way, vastly larger for him) therefore, the estated gentleman shall have eight times greater weight than his poor labourer, in the choice of a minister, to take charge of their souls.

Of what value, in opposition to the cavils of Infidelity, would have been all the overwhelming evidence in support of revelation, had it been recorded in the New Testament, that the great majority of the poorer class of a congregation were in favour of Timothy or Titus, but that as some of the rich, who paid the greater share of the stipend were against him, he was unable to obtain, in his favour, two thirds of men and money; yet that so many of the men were for him that he lost the congregation by only three and nine pence half-penny.

Strange and farcical as this representation may appear, it is unnecessary to say more than that, though such things did not take place in the days of primitive christianity, yet they have taken place in Ulster—they are taking place, and they may take place again.

The simple numerical majority, and the numerical majority alone of the members of a christian congregation, settles who shall be its minister.

Persons not actually in communion with a congregation, whatever the excellence of their moral character, or the liberality of their contributions for the support of the ministry of the gospel, have no right to vote: they have made no public profession of their attachment to the principles maintained by the church; they have given no pledge of submission to ecclesiastical discipline, and over them the church, as an ecclesiastical body, has no controul. Such persons may be the baptized children of believing parents, and in good standing as to moral character; but as they have not submitted themselves to the laws of that worshipping assembly, nor submitted to the cours e prescribed for furnishing satisfactory evidence to the church of the necessary qualifications for church membership—as, in a word, they have not united themselves as members to that particular congregation, they have no warrant for interfering with the peculiar rights of the members of that congregation.

All members of a christian congregation, female as well as male, have a right to vote in the choice of a minister. God has laid no prohibition on females in this case, and man has no right to lay any. As members of the church of Christ

they have a right to all privileges offered by the Saviour without money and without price; and the choice of a minister to take the oversight of their souls is an important privilege, which it is their duty to improve.

It is to be hoped that popular election both in Ulster, and throughout the whole Christian Church, will soon be in full exercise. Home education, for those who will in future occupy so large a proportion of the pulpits of Ulster. has provided for the people an opportunity which they could have never otherwise enjoyed, of becoming acquainted with the character of candidates for the holy office. Let christian congregations improve this opportunity to the utmost. Never let them make two or three pulpit exhibitions the only ground of their choice:—let them become acquainted, so far as in their power, with the character of each candidate—how did he conduct himself at college—what was his standing among his fellow students and with his teachers—what were his habits in attendance on public worship and observance of the Sabbath, when from home. A few good sermons are easily got, but if there be nothing left for manufacturing others like them when they are gone, alas for the poor befooled congregation!—and supposing that there should, if there be not also piety and zeal, and the different qualifications essential to the ministerial character, how lamentable are the circumstances of the people: their dearth is afflictive far beyond a dearth of water—their Judah mourneth and the gates thereof languish, they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up, because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the ploughmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

O Lord though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. O the hope of Israel, and Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

THE ABOLITION OT BRITISH COLONIAL SLAVERY.

We have often reflected with surprise on the conduct of not a few christian ministers and journalists, in reference to

system of Colonial Slavery. We have heard them denounce, m the pulpit and the press, national sins, which, in point of gravation, are confessedly inferior; while on the subject of s "great evil" they have either maintained total silence, or, in some cases, charged with wild enthusiasm—with a disre- d of all "vested rights"—an unjustifiable interference with he rights of property," all who were labouring for the im- diate emancipation of British slaves. Neither as men, nor as rnalists, will we ever sacrifice principle to profit,—godliness gain. The system of slavery which Britain has so long and so fully tolerated in the colonies, we regard as a system which s man of his dearest rights, which violates the letter and the rit of the British constitution—which produces, as a ne- sary result, and to a fearful extent, immorality among the pressors and the oppressed; and is entirely repugnant to the rit of the sacred volume. With these views, we promised oppose slavery. That promise has been faithfully kept; l as the question is likely soon to be adjusted by "the three tates of the realm," we hasten to inform our readers of the sent state of this great cause. In April last, a splendid de- nstration of anti-slavery feeling was made before his MA- STY's Ministers in Downing-st., by the appearance of 339 legates from different parts of the United Kingdom. Spirited solutions were proposed and unanimously passed, and a Memorial" to the Noble Premier, embodying the principles their resolutions, was submitted, by the assembled delegates, his MAJESTY'S Government. The delegates declared in eir memorial, that emancipation, to be "safe and satisfactory," ust be *immediate*, *entire*, and *peaceful*. We were happy find, that the friends of emancipation in Belfast, were re- esented on the above memorable occasion; the committee of e anti-slavery society having deputed the Rev. JAMES CAR- LE and JAMES STANDFIELD, Esq., who, assisted by the lented Vice-president of the Society ROBERT JAMES TEN- ENT, Esq., executed the commission of the Committee, by sembling with the delegates, and taking part in the mea- ures they adopted. The delegates having pointedly explained, hat they considered as a "safe and satisfactory" measure; and s Majesty's ministers having repeated the declaration, that the easure they proposed, would possess these two features, ere very properly viewed by the delegates, as having con- tructively adopted their views of a "safe and satisfactory" plan, nd as, consequently, pledged to introduce a bill, based on the ust and equitable principle of immediate and entire abolition

What then, must have been their surprise, when they discovered from the developement of his plan by the Colonial Minister, that the proposed measure was not only opposed to the principles of *immediate* emancipation; but in fact, was not a bill for the abolition of slavery at all; for it merely substituted one kind of slavery, under the name of apprenticeship, for another! Admitting in the preamble, that it was "just and expedient" to emancipate all British slaves, yet it made no provision for their emancipation. The anti-slavery feeling of the country was roused—protests against the proposed measures were forwarded from many parts of the United Kingdom, and had not ministers yielded, in some important particulars, their bill, ministerial though it was, must have been lost by a great majority. Of the numerous protests against the ministerial measure, which actually appeared, we have met with none, which more justly describes its essential defects, than the protest of the committee of the Belfast Auxiliary Society; and as this document not only possesses a local interest, but embodies just and important principles, we feel great pleasure in giving it a permanent record, by transferring it to our pages.

STATEMENT

Of the Belfast Auxiliary Anti-slavery Committee, on the Government Plan of Negro Emancipation.

In the present state of the question of Negro emancipation, the Belfast Anti-slavery Committee, feel called upon to give public expression to their sentiments, respecting the plan proposed for that purpose, by his Majesty's Ministers.

The Committee feel relieved from the necessity of reiterating the arguments which have been so often adduced, in favour of immediate and total emancipation. The perils supposed to attach to such a course, have been long proved to be imaginary; and the duty of following it acknowledged to be imperative, by the true friends of the slave throughout the empire; and the last doubt which could have been entertained of this unanimity of sentiment, was finally removed by the splendid array of Deputies, (339 in number,) who attended at Exeter Hall, in April last, to concentrate, in the ears of Government, the voice of humanity, from every considerable city and town in the United Kingdom.

It was deliberately and unanimously declared, at that memorable meeting, as the indispensable condition of a safe and satisfactory settlement of the slave question, that the abolition of slavery must be, "in the first place, TOTAL; in the second place, IMMEDIATE; and in the third place, PEACEABLE."

The Belfast Anti-Slavery Committee, adhere, steadfastly, to the principles thus solemnly enunciated; and, in the exercise of their duty, they feel bound to watch over their execution, and protest against every attempt at their violation.

With every disposition to think favourably of the intentions and egrity of the Administration—with even an anxiety to avoid the cessity of disapproving its measures, they cannot, in conscience, but clare, which they do unanimously, that the Government plan, for e future disposal of the rights of our fellow creatures and fellow-bjects, now in slavery, in the West Inies, IS NOT EMANCIPATION, THER TOTAL OR IMMEDIATE, but that it is a system of CONTINUED JUSTICE and USURPATION, which affords no security, that the PEACE the Colonies will be preserved.

The Committee proceed to state the principal particulars of the n to which they feel themselves called upon to offer an uncom-omising opposition:—

First—All slaves above six years of age are to be registered as prentices; and, under that milder name, are still to labour, during ree-fourths of their time, for the exclusive benefit of their masters, *elve years*, to come! During this period, which, in a great propor-n of cases, must extend to the end of life, they are to receive no ual wages, and to be cheered by no hope of benefitting themselves their families, in proportion to their exertions; the sole return to ich they are entitled, being the very limited allowances which are, present given them *by law*, in order to keep them in condition for bour, or a money payment in lieu thereof, which, on the very high-t estimate, would not exceed the sum of two-pence or three-pence day.*

The objects of this forced apprenticeship can be only,—1. To ach the Negro habits of regular labour: or, 2. to secure the inter-ts of the master. In both these respects, the Committee are con-nced, that it will be inoperative, and speedily found to be as im-olitic as it is unjust. For, *with respect to the master*, the labour is ne for him by this disguised slavery, will be even more reluctant d inefficient than that which he has been accustomed to derive from very, in its unmitigated form: the whip being taken from the nds of his driver, will deprive him, in a great degree, of the stimulus *terror*, while the absence of a system of remuneration by wages, is fficient to neutralize all the better motives to exertion, derived from nbition or hope. And *with respect to the slave*, it appears too ab-rd to expect, that, if, as some persons allege, he cannot be excited voluntary labour, by the *immediate* enjoyment of freedom and dequate wages, he will yet be taught habits of cheerful industry, by e mere hope that he may obtain them at the end of twelve years, he should happen to live so long. In a word, the motives to exer-on which the terrors of slavery supply, will be, thus, in some degree moved: and inducements of industry, which must be produced by edom, will in no degree be supplied; so that it would almost seem if this inconsistent and impracticable plan had been constructed for e express purpose of proving the impossibility of any compromise, r the sake of interest, between good and evil.

Secondly—While the atrocities of slavery are to be in some degree itigated, by depriving the master, as such, of the power of corporal nishment, this power is still preserved, though transferred to other nds. The magistrate is still to be empowered to use the lash, as a

* Evidence before the Lords, cited in Lord Howick's Speech of 14th May.—tement of the Anti-Slavery Committee, 22d June.

stimulus to labour, or as a punishment for real or supposed idleness. Thus, unremunerated labour is still to be the doom of the unhappy negro, for three-fourths of his time, during twelve years to come; and the mode of enforcing this robbery of his rights, is still to be the whip. And this is called *emancipation, safe and satisfactory!*

Thirdly—The nation is to be called upon to pay 20 millions to purchase the consent of the slave-holders to the execution of this plan.

In entering their decided protest against this part of the Ministerial resolutions, the Committee wish to be distinctly understood. Associated as they are, not for political or financial purposes, but to promote the abolition of slavery upon christian principles, they are determined to look, with a single eye, to their one great object, and not to mix it up with other considerations, however important. If, then, the object of their association had been fully accomplished by the Government plan; if the negro had received, at the hands of those who have too long been the accomplices of his oppressors, the full measure of relief to which he is entitled by the laws of God, and which forms but a poor compensation for the sufferings which he and his ancestors have long endured, this Committee would have felt bound to leave every other argument to the wisdom of the legislature, without remonstrance or opposition. But, when the measure of relief, to be thus dearly purchased, is found to be disfigured by the cruel and criminal injustice which they have pointed out; and when Ministers do not disguise that this heavy additional burthen is to be imposed upon the country, *as compensation* to the planters for their deprivation of a *right*,—they feel in every way bound to remonstrate against the violence of injustice, and insult of christian principle, which these measures involve. They renew their protest, therefore, that slavery can never be legalized by any human ordinance, and that to pay money, *as compensation*, for its abolition, is a composition with crime. It is not within their competence to protest against the injustice of loading with this enormous sum the industry of the British nation; but they do protest against the payment of a degrading tribute to violence and oppression, to purchase from them a hollow and unsatisfactory truce.

Fourthly—Such as this Government plan of mitigation is, its execution, in a great measure, at least, is to be entrusted to the Colonial Legislatures, that is to the slave-masters themselves. Thus, as it appears to this Committee, the most distant hope of the measure working, not with satisfaction, for that is impossible, but with any tolerable endurance, is finally shut out. The distribution of freedom is confided to men schooled in the worst despotism that the world ever witnessed;—the protection of the slave is entrusted to the oppressors from whose grasp he has just been torn;—the execution of a law, is handed over to those who have constantly, and even with factious and disloyal violence, denied the authority of the Legislature; and provisions for moral and religious instruction are to be made by those who have persecuted the ministers and proscribed the celebrations of religion.*

In conclusion, the Committee have merely to appeal to the sound

* "That his Majesty be enabled to defray any such expence as he may incu in establishing an efficient Stipendiary Magistracy in the Colonies, and in

nse and religious feeling of the public, if they have not shown sufficient grounds for the determination to which they have come, to exert every nerve in opposition to those portions of the Ministerial lan, above detailed. In the remainder of that plan, along with much at is decidedly objectionable, they acknowledge that there is, also, uch that is excellent, and deserving of gratitude from the friends of e oppressed negro. The evil, however, which is embodied along ith the good, is of such a nature that it cannot be acquiesced in without a sacrifice of principle; and the Committee cannot but express eir surprise and regret, that the majority of the London Anti-lavery Committee, together with the very small fraction of the nti-Slavery delegates, who remained in London, should have departed from the great principle of total and immediate abolition, to hich they themselves acceded in April last, or should have assumed, ithout authority, to represent the feeling of the public, as disposed be satisfied with the half measure proposed by the Government.

In any event, the Committee believe that they have only performed a duty to themselves and their constituents, by thus laying efore them the grounds of their deliberate conviction,—

That the plan proposed by the Ministers does not pay the simple bt of justice due to the slave,—that it contemplates a system of bour, without motive and without hope, which, even if practicable, ould be equally degrading to the negro and injurious to the master, —that it calls upon the nation to sanction a principle which religion nd social order alike repudiate,—that it does not substitute freedom r slavery, but merely one kind of slavery for another; striking off few links of the chain, and rivetting the remainder more firmly an ever. And, in conclusion, they respectfully call upon those Members of either House of Parliament, who have adopted the rinciple of immediate emancipation, not to support the Ministerial easure till it be made consistent with that principle, and freed from ose blots of injustice and tyranny, which can never be sanctioned by *free* people, without disgrace, or by a *christian* people, without rime.

Belfast, 6th July, 1833. JAMES CARLILE, Secretary.

Since this document appeared, the Metropolitan Committee ave acted with energy and decision; and in consequence, the ill, in passing through the Commons, has been rendered less bjectionable, especially as the terms of apprenticeship have een reduced to 5 and 7 years, respectively, and a provision as been made for the safety of christian ministers of all denominations, in preaching among the negroes "the unsearchable riches of CHRIST." While we cannot but still view this bill as the act of a government yielding what they cannot

---

uiding the Local Legislatures in providing for the religious and moral education of the negro population to be emancipated."—*5th Resolution.*

"That *upon the Recommendation of the Local Legislature*, his Majesty will be prepared to recommend to Parliament, out of the revenues of this country, to grant such aid as may be deemed necessary for the due support of the *administration of justice*, of an efficient *Police Establishment*, and of a general system of *religious and moral education*."—*Heads of the Government Plan.*

refuse to a nation's just demands, as a measure more of state policy, than of sound principle; yet we rejoice, that even as it is, it seals the doom of British slavery, and that by its moral influence, it must tend to abolish slavery in every part of the earth. England will *now* expect every nation to do its duty!

THE *CHRISTIAN FREEMAN*, AND THE EDITOR OF THE *COVENANTER*.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

THE Rev. Thomas Houston, Editor of the *Covenanter*, has, in the last number of that periodical, assailed the conductors of the *Christian Freeman*, on account of the report which we lately gave of the proceedings of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, in the celebrated case between him and the Rev. John Paul, of Carricklergus. One of the leading objects of Mr. Houston, throughout the whole of his remarks, appears to have been to identify himself and the principles which he has advocated in the *Covenanter*, with the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church itself, and to represent the *Christian Freeman* as having attacked the latter, instead of having merely expressed its dissent from principles which are peculiarly his own. It is surely too much for Mr. Houston to attempt not only to stir up strife between two sister communities, which have hitherto been co-witnesses for evangelical truth, but to re-assert doctrines which have been substantially condemned in the very resolutions of Synod to which he professes his adherence. We love and honour the Reformed Presbyterian Church. They have refused to bow their necks to a yoke of intolerance, which some young and over-zealous professors would have forced on them under the semblance of religious principle; and when we openly express our honest dissent from what we conceive to be the persecuting principles of the *Covenanter*, let not its Editor pretend to tell the world that we are attacking the *Covenanting Church*. We are doing no such thing—we are *vindicating* the principles of that Church from an imputation of intolerance, from which the Rev. John Paul has defended it in his able writings against the doctrine of the *Covenanter*.

The first charge against us is, that we took our report, in substance at least, from the *Belfast News-Letter*; and this report, the Editor of the *Covenanter* assures us, contained a number of gross misrepresentations. The Editor of that Journal can, we dare say, defend himself; and, if it be any satisfaction to the *Covenanter* to know the fact, we can assure him that we did *not* take our report from the *News Letter*—and, moreover, if the alleged misrepresentations of the *News-Letter* be any thing akin to those with which the *Freeman* is charged, we suspect that they will be found, even on the showing of the Rev. Thomas Houston himself, to be *bona fide* matters of fact. He refers us to his own *ex post facto* report in the *Guardian*, as containing an authentic record of his sentiments; and, strange to say, this very document fully bears out every sentiment which the *Christian Freeman* has ascribed to him. Is it not astonishing that he should talk of misrepresentations when his own 'full report' abounds with them? As an instance we select the

owing statement. 'Mr. Paul had challenged him to prove facts, ich he alleged were misstatements. It was enough to say that he ld require to have something more than Mr. Paul's mere assertion ore he entered on the proof.' Now, it is true, that Mr. Paul rged him with *twelve statements* contained in his libel, not one of ch was founded in fact. He pronounced them *untruths*, and chal- ged Mr. Houston to show that *any one* of them was true. He sat n, to allow him an opportunity to establish their truth, but Mr. did not accept the challenge. He never attempted to vindicate self. He never uttered a syllable on the subject. He said no- g at all of Mr. Paul's assertions, or of Mr. Paul's proving the . All this is *pure fabrication*. Nor was it Mr. Paul that was und to prove facts—it was Mr. Houston. Mr. Paul asserted that at Mr. Houston had stated to be facts, were not facts, and Mr. ouston was bound to prove that they were, but this he never at- pted. He was challenged to do it, but declined.

The first alleged misrepresentation, on our part, is, that the *Freeman* ted the question before the Synod to have been, 'Whether n should be allowed to worship God according to their con- ences, without being fined, or imprisoned, or hanged for their inions by the civil magistrate.' In opposition to this statement, e Editor of the *Covenanter* declares that he would permit men o *hold* what opinions they pleased, and to worship God accord- g to the dictates of their consciences, so long as they refrain m *openly* propagating gross and soul-destroying heresy and idola- , thereby injuring the morals and *peace* of the community." This table sentiment is more fully explained in his '*Reviewer Reviewed*,' age 14,) from which it appears that 'error in the *mind*,' is not to punished by the civil magistrate, and that 'men may HOLD their inions without disturbance, *so long as they keep them to themselves*.' he meaning of this is, that the Rev. Thomas Houston, would not nish, as criminal, opinions, which were kept a profound *secret*, or whose existence he knew nothing—in other words, that he would t employ *torture*, we suppose, in order to extract from men a *con- ssion* of their 'heretical pravity;' but, if they should think them- lves impelled by a conscientious regard for what they believed to be *uth*, to make an *open profession* of it, and if *truth* in *their* esteem ould chance to be *heresy* in that of *Mr. Houston*, why then, he would and them over to the civil magistrate, to be fined or hanged accor- ng to the measure of their guilt, or the circumstances of aggrava- on by which its commission might have been attended. This is sub- antially Mr. Houston's *explanation* of our alleged mis-statement of is views, and truly we cannot see how it mends the matter; for, hough he is so much of a liberal, that he would not *punish* a man for *olding his tongue, and keeping his mind to himself*, he would take good re to punish him for *speaking*, and for making an *open profession* of is conscientious opinions. We do not think that Mr. Houston is ntitled to much *credit* for exercising *forbearance* towards a heretic, this heretic be so expert a tactician as to keep Mr. Houston in *ig- orance* of his heresy. We verily took it for granted, that Mr. Houston would have calculated so far upon our good opinion of him, s to give us credit for believing that he would have no man punished s an heretic, whose deviation from orthodox opinions was a *secret nown only to the man himself*.

The Editor of the *Covenanter* appears to be dissatisfied that we

should have mentioned any specific mode of punishment in connexion with his sentiments. He disclaims capital punishment, and yet by acknowledging the Augsburgh renovation, he has fully recognized capital punishment: it recognizes confiscation of goods, banishment, and death. We are aware that the Editor of the *Covenanter* has not been very *consistent* in his publications on this subject, and the Rev. John Paul has, in his '*Review of Mr. Houston's Christian Magistrate*,' (chap. 7.) exposed no less than 14 *contradictions* into which he has fallen; but still, in regard to so plain a matter as this is, it is passing strange that he should betray any wavering, especially since he has, in his own *authorized* report of his speech in the *Guardian*, (*July* 23,) repeated and enforced the same sentiment. Nay, more, he has, in the same authorized document (*Guardian*, ibid. col 3.) recorded his belief that *heresy*, &c., should be punished, 'not merely as associated with *faction* or *rebellion* against the *state*, but as '*offences*' against *God*;' and since *heresy* is an *opinion*, it is extraordinary that he should call it a *misrepresentation* to say that he would punish men for their opinions. Farther still, in the same paper (*July* 26, col. 1) he has, in an approved quotation from Baillie, reprobated, as an '*Independent* error' the notion that *opinions* should be publicly *tolerated*, if the holders of those opinions '*trouble not the state*.' If he shrink from *punishing* men for their *opinions*, he is falling rapidly into an '*Independent error*;' and in his last *Covenanter* he has fallen into something very like it, when he makes it to be a qualification of *punishable* error, that it should 'injure the peace of the community.'

Our contemporary is greatly offended with us for supposing that he would punish '*simple dissentients*' from his own communion. We never said whether he *would* or would *not*, because we do not exactly know what may be the measure of '*dissent*,' which he might regard as '*heretical*,' and accordingly we said nothing on the subject; but we said that he would punish dissenters from his own communion, whom he should judge to be heretics.; and we know that he has declared Arminians to be heretics, pestilent and soul-destroying heretics. We are now prepared to go a little farther, and to show that he would actually punish as *heretics*, the Rev. John Paul, and a large number of *his own brethren in the ministry!!* In a passage of his *authorized* speech in the *Guardian*, (July 26) he quotes with approbation, a passage from the Rev. John M'Millan, in which the doctrine of '*an unrestricted, passive toleration*' of religious opinions is declared to be '*a gross heresy*,' and if we mistake not, he has himself, in one of his own publications, stigmatized it as a '*gross error*.' Now, the Rev. John Paul, and a large and respectable body of the ministers of the Covenanted church, have '*openly*' and '*pertinaciously*' maintained this '*gross heresy*,' and till this very hour they persist in its maintenance, as a part of the truth of God. But '*gross errors* and *gross heresies*' ought to be suppressed, and their maintainers ought to be *punished* by the sword of the civil magistrate: therefore, according to Mr. Houston, the *Rev. John Paul, and a large body of the ministers of the Covenanted Church*, with whom Mr. Houston is, at this moment, in actual communion, *ought to be punished with the sword of the civil Magistrate!!!*

The Editor of the *Covenanter* entirely 'disavows *persecution* and *intolerance*,' and, from the strong expressions which he uses on this subject, a stranger to his opinions, would imagine that he was almost a liberal. He has, however, a *meaning of his own*, for the word *per-*

ution, of which meaning the rest of the world are most ignorantly nocent. Both in his Periodical, and in his '*Reviewer Reviewed*,' *age* 19 *et seg.*) he argues, at great length, to show that *persecution* eans, exclusively, 'trouble for *righteousness sake*,' and that if a man in *error*, no matter what may be the degree of *punishment* to which is exposed *on account of that error*, it is *not persecution*. When, erefore, the Editor of the *Covenanter* so warmly protests against *rsecution*, his meaning is, that he would '*trouble*' no man 'for *hteousness sake*'—that is, he would neither *fine*, nor *imprison*, nor *nish*, nor *hang*, nor *burn*, for his *opinions*, a single human being o *agreed with the Rev. Thomas Houston* in religious matters; and can conscientiously add, that we really believe he would *not!* The ditor of the *Covenanter* is, therefore, no *persecutor*, in his *own* sense the word; inasmuch as *he would not put to death his own disciples, erely because they were so!*

We are next charged with misrepresentation, for having said that r. Houston characterized a '*passive toleration*' by the civil magis ate, of differences of religious belief as the 'cut-throat of all true ligion;' but, let such readers as think it worth their while, st turn to his own authorized report of his speech in the *Guardian* July 26, (col. 1.)—a speech which had been evidently written out nd prepared with the utmost care, and they will be astonished to find e Rev. Thomas Houston, arguing with all his might, that when e Westminister Divines declared it to be 'a *sin* to *tolerate* a *false eligion*,' they meant a *passive toleration*; as the distinction between *uthoritative* and *passive* toleration *was not then known!* In like anner, when *toleration* is mentioned in the writings of the Reform rs, in the Act and Testimony, and in the other standards of the urch, he contended that *passive toleration* is meant; and yet he lks about misrepresentation!

The next item which we shall notice in the *Covenanter's* list of harges, relates to the continued obligation of the judicial law of Moses. It is a very trifling matter, indeed, whether the establish ent of this sentiment were a 'principal' or a subordinate 'object' of Mr. Houston's speech, or whether it were only 'a point in the argu ent.' The main question is, was the sentiment expressed at all? Mr. Houston admits that it *was*, and, in his '*Christian Magistrate*' (93) e declares the judicial law to be '*moral*' in its nature, and of '*per etual obligation*.' It is, therefore, singular that he should be offended t our notice of an opinion which he not only advanced in his speech, ut which he had deliberately published to the world beforehand. It s true, he tells us that this opinion was brought forward 'with *xpress limitations*'—but what were these *limitations?* Why, that the udicial law is of '*perpetual obligation*,' *except*—and we beg our read rs to mark the *exception*,—'in so far as the *general equity thereof may equire*;' for it is in this strange fashion that Mr Houston applies he words of the Westminster Confession.—(See *Guardian* of July 23, ol. 3) The meaning of this 'express limitation' is, that a law is *inding*, except in so far as it is generally *equitable*—in other words, hat the *equitable* parts of it are *not* binding, and its *inequitable* parts *re* binding! If Mr. Houston have merely blundered in point of *xpression*, and if he mean to say that the judicial law is binding in o far as it *is* sanctioned by principles of *equity*, we beg to observe hat this is just saying, that those portions of it which *agree* with the *oral law* are to be regarded as *still in force*; but it happens that he

himself has determined that the *whole judicial law*, in regard to the punishment of heretics, is itself *moral* in its nature, and, therefore, his 'express limitation' resolves itself into this very edifying proposition, that the judicial law is binding, *except—in so far as it does not annul its own requirements!*

We have to complain of the unkind insinuations respecting motives, with which the article in the *Covenanter* abounds. It is broadly intimated, that we *wished* to see a schism in the Reformed Presbyterian body—that we were disappointed when the question was adjusted; with much more to the same purpose, which christian charity had evidently no concern in suggesting. The expression, which we used, relative to an *ad interim* termination of the controversy has been seized upon as countenancing the ungenerous insinuation referred to. We used this expression because we feared that there were spirits in the church, who would scarcely rest satisfied with the '*Pacific Act*' of the Synod, which had, without bearing too hard upon individuals, freed the body from the imputation of persecution. By this deed, with the doctrinal parts of which we are glad to find that the Editor of the *Covenanter* professes himself to be 'fully satisfied,' the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, has 'utterly disclaimed the doctrine,' that 'men ought to be punished with death *because they differ in opinion*' from Covenanters. Now, Independents, Methodists, Anabaptists, nay, even, Arians, Socinians, Papists, even the grossest *heretics* in the world, 'differ' from Covenanters, 'in opinion', and, therefore, the Synod has, to its lasting honour, declared, that neither they, nor any other contemporary sects ought to be punished with death, for *differing from it in opinion*. In making this declaration, the Synod has quietly affirmed the sentiment, which the Rev. Thomas Houston has condemned in Mr. Paul as an 'error;' and as the Editor of the *Covenanter* is 'fully satisfied' with the declaration above quoted, it is to be hoped that he will use his influence in persuading the Rev. Thomas Houston to be of the same mind,

So far from being conscious of the unworthy feeling imputed to us, we trust inadvertently, we rejoice in witnessing the prosperity of our Covenanting brethren as an ecclesiastical body. Our judgment is with Mr. Paul on the question of *passive* toleration. We think that Mr. Paul and his friends have done essential service to the christian community at large, and to the Reformed Prebyterian Church in particular, by the fearless and glorious stand which they have made — High always in our esteem, the Reformed Presbyterian body now stands higher than ever. The Synod has, in its public capacity, vindicated the principles set forth in its authorized formulas of religious doctrines, and has practically declared its adherence to those fundamental laws of civil and religious freedom, for our enjoyment of which we are indebted to the labour and the sufferings of our Covenanting ancestors.

Wilson, Printer, Belfast.